CLAIMS

What is claimed is:

1. A method comprising:

generating content to be broadcast from a content provider system by embedding content descriptors and metadata within content data stored on the content provider system;

broadcasting said content to at least one receiver connected with said content provider system via a network;

receiving said content at the receiver;

selectively caching or presenting said content at the receiver based on a comparison of the content descriptors and metadata embedded in the content and user preference data stored on the receiver;

accumulating user preferences regarding content received;

transmitting said user preferences from the receiver; and

modifying future content to be broadcast based on said user preferences.

2. The method of claim 1, wherein said receiving said content comprises caching the content on the receiver.

3. The method of claim 2, wherein said caching is done on a hard disk drive within the receiver.

4. The method of claim 1, wherein said accumulating user preferences comprises requesting active user feedback regarding the user's opinion of the content.

5. The method of claim 1, wherein said broadcasting comprises transmitting a digital data service via an IP multicast.

6. The method of claim 1, wherein said accumulating user preferences comprises passive user participation by gathering information regarding the user's pattern of consuming content without requesting direct feedback from the user.

7. The method of claim 1, wherein said transmitting said user preferences is preformed via a persistent back-channel between the receiver and the content provider system.

8. A system comprising:

a content provider system to embed content descriptors and metadata within content data stored on the content provider system, broadcast said content over a first network connected with the content provider system, receive feedback regarding user preferences via a feedback channel connected with the content provider, and modify future content broadcasts based on said feedback;

a head-end connected with said first network to receive content from the content provider system, encapsulate said content within a multiplex, and transmit said multiplex over a second network connected with the head-end;

a receiver connected with said second network to receive the multiplex from the head-end, de-multiplex the multiplex to extract the content from the content provider system, receive content, selectively cache or present the content based on a comparison of the content descriptors and metadata embedded in the content and user preference data

stored on the receiver, accumulate user preferences regarding content received, and transmit said user preferences via a feedback channel coupled with the receiver.

9. The system of claim 8, wherein said receiver caches content containing content descriptors that match said user preference data stored on the receiver.

10. The system of claim 9, wherein said receiver caches content on a hard disk drive within the receiver.

11. The system of claim 8, wherein said user preferences regarding content received are accumulated by the receiver comprise active user feedback regarding the user's opinion of content.

12. The system of claim 8, wherein said broadcast of content from the content provider system comprises an IP multicast.

13. The system of claim 8, wherein said user preferences regarding content received are accumulated by the receiver comprise active user feedback regarding the user's opinion of content.

14. The system of claim 8, wherein said multiplex comprises an MPEG2 multiplex.

15. The system of claim 8, wherein said feedback channel coupled with the receiver and the content provider comprises a persistent backchannel.

16. A content provider system comprising:

a playlist composition subsystem to embed content descriptors and metadata within content data stored on the content provider system;

a transmitter to broadcast said content over a first network connected with the content provider system; and

a channel rating analysis subsystem to receive feedback regarding user preferences via a feedback channel connected with the content provider, and modify future content broadcasts based on said feedback

17. The content provider system of claim 16, wherein said first network comprises an Asynchronous Transfer Mode (ATM) backbone.

18. The content provider system of claim 18, wherein said broadcasting comprises transmitting a digital data service via an IP multicast.

19. A receiver comprising:

a receiver connected with a network to receive broadcast multiplex from a content provider system wherein the multiplex contains content descriptors and metadata within content data;

a de-multiplexer to de-multiplex the multiplex to extract the content data from the content provider system and receive content; and

an application to selectively cache or present the content based on a comparison of the content descriptors and metadata embedded in the content and user preference data

stored on the receiver, accumulate user preferences regarding content received, and transmit said user preferences via a feedback channel coupled with the receiver.

20. The receiver of claim 19, wherein said caching is done on a hard disk drive within the receiver.

21. The receiver of claim 19, wherein said accumulating user preferences comprises requesting active user feedback regarding the user's opinion of the content.

22. The receiver of claim 19, wherein said accumulating user preferences comprises passive user participation by gathering information regarding the user's pattern of consuming content without requesting direct feedback from the user.

23. The receiver of claim 19, wherein said transmitting said user preferences is preformed via a persistent back-channel between the receiver and the content provider system.

24. A machine-readable medium having stored thereon data representing sequences of instructions, the sequences of instructions which, when executed by a processor, cause the processor to:

generate content to be broadcast from a content provider system by embedding content descriptors and metadata within content data stored on the content provider system;

broadcast said content to at least one receiver connected with said content provider system via a network;

receive said content at the receiver;

selectively cache or present said content on the receiver based on a comparison of the content descriptors and metadata embedded in the content and user preference data stored on the receiver;

accumulate user preferences regarding content received;

transmit said user preferences from the receiver; and

modify future content to be broadcast based on said user preferences.

25. The machine-readable medium of claim 24, wherein said receiving said content comprises caching the content on the receiver.

26. The machine-readable medium of claim 25, wherein said caching is done on a hard disk drive within the receiver.

27. The machine-readable medium of claim 24, wherein said accumulating user preferences comprises requesting active user feedback regarding the user's opinion of the content.

28. The machine-readable medium of claim 24, wherein said broadcasting comprises transmitting a digital service via an IP multicast.

29. The machine-readable medium of claim 24, wherein said accumulating user preferences comprises passive user participation by gathering information regarding the user's pattern of consuming content without requesting direct feedback from the user.

30. The machine-readable medium of claim 24, wherein said transmitting said user preferences is preformed via a persistent back-channel between the receiver and the content provider system.